

## **Meeting Content**

### **Message from the Division**

#### **Slide 1**

##### **Title**

The Indiana Gypsy Moth Management Program depends on public participation. Public participation in the management program is necessary because ultimately either gypsy moth infestations or the actions taken to control them will affect the public. To be able to actively participate the Division holds several public meetings in areas where gypsy moth has been detected but is not yet causing damage. When gypsy moth is first detected the public may not be aware that there is a problem, that there will be a problem or what can or is being done to alleviate the problem.

The main purpose of the public meeting is to involve the public in the gypsy moth management process by:

- Providing information about gypsy moth biology
- What damage can the gypsy moth cause?
- How are gypsy moth infestations detected?
- What is Slow the Spread Program?
- What are the options for control?
- What does the DNR propose?

There are several Governmental agencies cooperating in this effort.

- Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Entomology and Plant Pathology – Public Outreach, Regulatory, and Control
- Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry – Survey, Detection, and control
- US Forest Service – Slow the Spread Project Coordination and Control
- USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service – Plant Protection and Quarantine, Eradication
- Purdue University – Public Outreach and Information, Research

The public is encouraged to participate by commenting on how they want proceed with gypsy moth management in their communities.

The Division has many proposals and tools available to assist the communities but it is ultimately the decision of the public that will determine what if any action will be taken. Participation does not end at this meeting. Comments will be received until February 19<sup>th</sup>. when a final decision will need to be made for each location where action is being proposed.

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##### **Objectives**

The objectives of the meeting are to provide information on the following:

- Biology
- Damage
- Survey
- Treatment Options
- DNR proposal
- Questions and Comments

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#### **Biology**

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#### **Life Stage Preview**

Biology – The gypsy moth is an insect that goes through 4 life stage changes: egg, larva, pupa, and adult.

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#### **Egg mass**

The egg is laid in late summer and over winters. It hatches in early May in northern Indiana. There are anywhere from 500 – 1000 eggs in an egg mass. Eggs can be laid anywhere.

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#### **Early instar**

After they hatch they move to the foliage. If it is crowded they spin a silk thread and balloon or blow to another tree or hilltop. Then they start to feed.

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#### **Ballooning**

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#### **Late instar**

As they feed they grow. Each growth spurt is called an instar. The male larvae have 5 instars the female have 6. Early instars feed during the day. Late instars feed at night. They crawl down from the foliage and find shelter during the day. The last instar feeds 24 hours. A late instar caterpillar can eat a square foot of leaves in a 24-hour period. They can eat 11 square feet of foliage during their entire caterpillar stage.

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#### **Close up of late instar caterpillar**

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#### **Pupae**

After eating they change into a pupa. They attach themselves to a stable object to pupate. This can be on a tree trunk or the bumper of your car. They do not spin a cocoon. The pupae are bare except for small, tan hairs.

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#### **Adults**

Male moths emerge from their pupal cases first in early July. The females emerge three to five days later. The males have feathery antennae, are dark brown with an inverted V mark pointing to a dot on their wings. Females have similar wing markings but are light in color, are larger, do not have feathery antennae and can't fly. Each female produces a pheromone that attracts the male to her. They mate and she lays eggs in masses.

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#### **She will lay eggs on most anything. The eggs over winter and the cycle starts again.**

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#### **Misconceptions of Gypsy Moth**

There are several insect pests, which are confused with Gypsy moth. Several are shown here, including Fall Webworm, Bagworm, and Tent Caterpillars.

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#### **Damage**

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A pictures of oaks defoliated by gypsy moth larvae.

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#### **Why worry about gypsy moth?**

- They are easily distributed naturally and by people.
- Caterpillars have a wide host range – oaks are their favorite.
- Gypsy moth is not native to the United States.
- Only a few of its natural enemies have become established in the United States.
- Populations increase quickly. Each female lays 500 – 1000 eggs half of which may be females.
- They have an environmental impact that can be negative or positive.
- They can adversely affect the health of people and plants.

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#### **Hosts**

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#### **Defoliation:**

- Reduces a trees ability to produce and store food.
- The tree begins to decline.
- Branches and limbs begin to die.
- The tree becomes more susceptible to attacks from diseases and insects.
- Death may occur after just 2 years of 50% defoliation.

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#### **Forests:**

- Decreased vigor and decline of host trees.
- Reduces Timber value.
- Defoliation opens the forest canopy and exposes the forest floor.
- Species composition change occurs when dead trees are replaced by hosts less favored by the gypsy moth.
- Forest floor dries in spring. Seed germination may decline.
- Dead limbs and trees increase the fire load – forest fires spread faster.
- Reduces recreational uses and value.

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#### **Wildlife:**

- Hard mast will decrease (acorns, hickory nuts). It will eventually recover but at low levels in a forest where species composition has changed.
- Soft mast will increase. Some wildlife species will utilize soft mast.

- Bird populations fluctuate. An open canopy in spring predisposes nests to predation and parasitism (cow birds).
- Food availability changes – some birds will utilize the gypsy moth caterpillars for food. Others that depend on native caterpillar species for food may disperse to non-defoliated areas.
- Gypsy moths eat the foliage that some native caterpillars utilize thereby reducing the food base for native defoliators. Native butterfly and moth caterpillars may decline.
- Mammal populations will increase or decrease depending on food availability.
- Species may increase or decrease.

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### **Soil:**

- An open canopy exposes soil to sun and rain.
- Soil temperatures increase.
- The soil dries quicker.
- Erodes more readily dependant on slope. Erosion removes valuable nutrients that would help trees survive future defoliations.
- Reduces leaf litter.

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### **Water:**

- Soil washed into streams and lakes increases turbidity.
- Soil in water holds heat longer thereby increasing water temperatures.
- Aquatic weeds may grow faster, die and produce organic matter.
- Nutrient loads from caterpillar excrement, run off and aquatic weeds will reduce oxygen levels in some lakes and ponds.
- Aquatic species diversity will be reduced.
- Some lakes and reservoirs will have more water because of increased runoff.

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### **Urban Forest:** Where trees are already stressed

- Homeowners are liable for fallen limbs, tree removal costs, and replacement costs property values go down.
- Ecological damage.
- Trees cool the air in the summer, block wind, buffer noise, clean the air, and provide homes and shelter for wildlife. If removed these ecological benefits will be lost.

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### **Larvae**

Thousands of crawling, smelling caterpillars.

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### **Caterpillar hairs**

Drifting caterpillar hairs cause some public health concern. There may be skin and respiratory reaction to the erticating hairs.

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### **Droppings**

Their smell and their fecal pellets fall from the trees.

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### **Surveys**

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### **Survey – Why survey for Gypsy moth?**

Several states, along the leading edge of the infestation, trap for the male moths. Indiana sets traps on a grid system across the entire State.

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### **There are two types of traps:**

- Detection and monitoring.
- They use female sex pheromone to attract a male. The male then gets caught in the trap and is counted.
- Monitoring trap holds 250 moths.
- Detection holds 30.

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### **Egg mass survey:**

Based on trapping survey data we then select sites to look for egg masses. Trapping data, trapping history, egg mass finds or not, host availability, distance to the generally infested area, potential ecological threat all will help determine what we propose as an action.

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### **Treatment Options**

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### **Why Slow the Spread of Gypsy Moth**

- Though gypsy moth will never be totally eradicated movement can be slowed down.
- New technology is becoming available.
- Slowing gypsy moth allows time for the natural enemies to naturally keep populations down over longer periods without human intervention

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### **Natural enemies are**

- Predators – eat gypsy moth life stages.
- Pathogens – are bacteria, fungus or virus that utilize gypsy moth for reproduction in the end killing gypsy moth life stages.
- Parasitoids – other insects that reproduce inside gypsy moth life stages eventually kill the host.

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### **When are Gypsy Moth Treatments Appropriate?**

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### **Conditions considered** when proposing a treatment

- Hosts in the area.
- Distance from the generally infested area.
- Potential ecological threat.

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Gypsy Moth will never be totally eradicated

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#### Slow the Spread

- Indiana is in the program.

It allows natural enemies and pathogens to build up. It allows time for new technologies for better control. Slowing the spread conserves our natural resources

### Slide 38

With slow the spread action and without slow the spread action

### Slide 39

Possible Treatment Options

### Slide 40

No Action:

What would happen if no action is taken?

Populations will increase and spread. There could be ecological effects.

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Mass Trapping:

Placing large traps at close spacing. Catches male moths before they can mate. Is successful only where there are small populations.

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Ground Treatment:

Treatments conducted from the ground using either sun oil, Dimilin, or Btk; usually in combination with burlap banding. The DNR works with homeowners and this is a good option where populations are concentrated and localized.

### Slide 43

Btk by Air Application:

Applied when trap catches indicate a population and egg masses are found. This is effective on low level populations and is applied by a plane or helicopter over the tree canopy.

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What is the material we are proposing to use and how is it applied?

***Bacillus thuringiensis* variety *kurstaki* (Btk)** is a natural occurring soil bacteria. When the caterpillar ingests it the Btk forms a crystal in the caterpillars gut. Not all caterpillars are as susceptible as gypsy moth but it only affects caterpillars. It is nontoxic to humans and other mammals and is most efficiently applied from the air.

### Slide 45

Mating Disruption with Pheromone Flakes:

Applied when trap catches indicate a population but no egg masses are found. This is effective on very low level populations and applied by a plane or helicopter over the tree canopy.

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Mating Disruption:

Reduces future reproduction by not allowing the male to find a mate. Does not kill living organisms.

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Pheromone flakes:

Uses the female pheromone.

Attracts only the male moths.

Pheromone is impregnated onto very small plastic flakes.

**Slide 48****Proposals****Slide 49**

Maps are displayed showing our proposed treatment areas. (These can be found on our website you have visited).

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Security

- Material will be secured before, during, and after the operation.
- The plane will be secured.
- The DNR will have personnel monitoring from the ground and at the airport.

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Questions or Comments?

Gypsy Moth 2007

Division of Entomology and Plant Pathology

402 West Washington Street, Room W-290

Indianapolis, IN. 46204

PHONE: (317) 232- 4120

Or: (866) No-Exotic

FAX: (317) 232-2649

Email: **DEPP@dnr.IN.gov**

Website: **[www.IN.gov/dnr/entomolo/gypsymoth/pubmeet08.htm](http://www.IN.gov/dnr/entomolo/gypsymoth/pubmeet08.htm)**

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**Questions?**